

claims with their insurance companies or working with Federal, State and local agencies to address their disaster-related needs.

However, while 3,045 licensed child care centers were eligible, just 10 centers in Louisiana and only one in Mississippi received Federal assistance. There were 1,690 eligible centers in my home state of Mississippi alone. I understand that numerous centers are still going through the appeals process with FEMA and have yet to rebuild and reopen.

I introduced this legislation to amend the Stafford Act to ensure that emergency child care is recognized as a "critical service" in the aftermath of a terrorist attack, major disaster or other emergency.

While provisions of the Stafford Act provide assistance to private nonprofit facilities that provide critical services, emergency child care is not listed as one. Passage of this measure will designate emergency child care as a critical service and let families know that in the time of a disaster, the need for childcare will not be forgotten.

In an effort to rebuild and restore child care operations in my home State of Mississippi, the Mississippi Early Care and Education Infrastructure Initiative was formed by Mississippi State University in partnership with Chevron, Save the Children, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The goals of the Initiative were to quickly reopen the thousands of child care centers damaged or destroyed by the hurricanes, to retrain staff and upgrade curriculum materials and play equipment, and to prepare for future emergencies.

Further, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services approved child care waivers for \$60 million so that parents were provided with vouchers for 60 days for much-needed child care services while working or looking for work. These waivers lifted Federal requirements for State matching funds and went directly to the States to administer their Child Care and Development Funds. There was a huge bottleneck with this process and numerous centers and parents were unaware of these resources. Further, many parents that received these vouchers were unable to find operational child care facilities.

I applaud the efforts of the Initiative fanned in Mississippi and am thankful that the Department of Health and Human Services responded quickly to the affected states. June 1st marks the beginning of 2007 hurricane season. We must be sure to let families know that the Federal Government is doing its part to ensure that critical services are available in the event of another large-scale disaster or even a major terrorist attack. Enactment of the Emergency Child Care Services Act is the way to do it.

FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1427) to reform the regulation of certain housing-related

Government-sponsored enterprises, and for other purposes, with Mr. PASTOR (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 1427, the Federal Housing Finance Reform Act, and commend Chairman BARNEY FRANK for his hard work to develop a comprehensive, bipartisan government-sponsored enterprise, GSE, reform bill.

This legislation will restore accountability by strengthening federal oversight of Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the 12 Federal Home Loan Banks. It will consolidate regulation of the housing GSEs under the Federal Housing Finance Agency, a new, independent agency. The Federal Housing Finance Agency will be authorized to adjust the enterprises' risk-based capitol and even limit the size of their portfolios for a limited time, if necessary to ensure their safety and soundness.

H.R. 1427 also establishes an Affordable Housing Fund, which will be financed by a required contribution from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac of only 0.012 percent of their total mortgage portfolio each year. The fund will annually contribute approximately \$500 million to the construction, maintenance, and preservation of affordable housing.

The Affordable Housing Fund is an important step toward ensuring access to safe, affordable housing for all Americans, regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic region. In its first year, the funds will be used entirely to build much-needed homes throughout the region devastated by Hurricane Katrina. In subsequent years, the grants from the fund will be administered by states, and Minnesota will receive an estimated \$6.5 million each year to build affordable housing for the most vulnerable families.

I applaud Chairman FRANK for bringing forward a comprehensive and fair bill. I am particularly pleased that in contrast to last years' efforts, H.R. 1427 does not include language restricting faith-based and nonprofit organizations from receiving affordable housing funds for participation in nonpartisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote activities. Congress should put the needs of American families before political ideology, and this bill does just that.

The Federal Housing Finance Reform Act has the support of the Bush Administration, as well as Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, numerous other financial institutions, lenders, realtors, housing advocates, and many other housing organizations.

Access to safe and stable housing is a basic need and one that no individual or family should ever be denied. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 1427.

A TRIBUTE TO FRANCIS JOHNSON

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Francis "Frank" Johnson's accomplished career and influential musical legacy. Born in 1792 in Philadelphia, Johnson was well known as a professional musician by age 20. Overcoming the barriers of racism, Johnson achieved in-

credible success even in the face of such racial strife, composing over 300 pieces of music. Further, in a time when professional musicians were a rarity in the United States, Johnson established a career with incredible variety and importance that has had an impact on countless modern musicians.

Johnson trained with Richard Wills, the West Point band leader, and quickly mastered many instruments like the keyed bugle. He published his first composition, "A Collection of New Cotillions," in 1818, and soon became one of Philadelphia's premier musicians. Johnson's vast musical accomplishments were noted by author Robert Walsh in 1819, commenting: "In fine, he is the leader of the band at all balls, public and private; sole director of all serenades, acceptable and unacceptable; inventor-general of cotillions; to which add, a remarkable taste in distorting a sentimental, simple, and beautiful song, into a reel, jig or country-dance."

It is an honor to recognize a figure who was able to overcome incredible hardships to create a legacy that has affected countless generations. I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending Francis Johnson for his renowned musical achievements and lasting influence.

CONGRATULATING WILLIAM AND ESTHER DAVIDOWITZ AS THEY ARE HONORED AS "PILLARS OF THE COMMUNITY" IN WILKES-BARRE PENNSYLVANIA

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to William and Esther Davidowitz who are being honored as Amudei Tzibur, or Pillars of the Community, by Temple Israel in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

Mr. and Mrs. Davidowitz will be formally honored at Temple Israel's annual dinner to be held Wednesday, June 13, 2007.

Mr. and Mrs. Davidowitz are regarded as exemplary role models due to their achievements in both the Jewish community and the greater Wyoming Valley community.

Born in Brooklyn, New York and raised in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, Mr. Davidowitz served in the United States Army during World War II and later attended Penn State University where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration. He joined his family's shoe business in Hazleton and later moved to the Wilkes-Barre area to establish the Penn Footwear Company in Nanticoke.

Mr. Davidowitz is a past chairman of the United Jewish Appeal and he remains active in the Jewish Federation and he is a trustee at the Jewish Community Center in Wilkes-Barre. He has served on the boards of Temple Israel, the Jewish Community Center, Fox Hill Country Club and Penn State University, Lehman Campus.

Mr. and Mrs. Davidowitz were instrumental in the creation and dedication of many community projects including the United Hebrew Institute Art Room, the Davidowitz Lounge at the Jewish Community Center and the building

addition to the United Hebrew Institute in 1980.

The Seligman J. Strauss Lodge of B'nai B'rith presented Mr. Davidowitz with its Community Service Award and the trustees of the Luzerne County Community College recognized his efforts as vice chairman of the building authority responsible for the construction of the Nanticoke campus.

Mrs. Davidowitz serves on the board of the Jewish Community Center. She is a past board member of Temple Israel and Wilkes University and has held leadership roles at the Northeast Ethics Institute, Luzerne County Area Agency on Aging, King's College, Ballet Northeast, College Misericordia, Wyoming Seminary, John Heinz Institute, Penn State Lehman Campus, Northeast Pennsylvania Philharmonic, United Hebrew Institute and the Wyoming Valley Jewish Campaign, which she chaired in 1990.

Mrs. Davidowitz is a member of the Klezmer Band, "Freilox and Bagels," where she has played both the harp and the flute. She has served as the non-governmental representative to the United Nations for the National Council of Jewish Women and as a local representative to the United States Holocaust Memorial Council.

Mrs. Davidowitz has received tributes from the Greater Wilkes-Barre Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the National Council of Jewish Women, the Jewish Federation of Greater Wilkes-Barre and the Seligman J. Strauss Lodge of B'nai B'rith.

Mr. and Mrs. Davidowitz are the parents of four sons, Jeffrey, Ivan, Steven and Benjamin. They now have nine grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. and Mrs. Davidowitz on this auspicious occasion. Their inexhaustible energy and devotion to family and community is an inspiration for all. Their volunteer service is an extraordinary example of how two people can make a huge difference in the quality of life in America.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF UA LOCAL 370 PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, today I would like to take the opportunity to extend congratulations to the UA Local 370 Plumbers and Pipefitters as they commemorate their 100th anniversary. A celebration will be held on June 7 in Flint Michigan.

Local 370 was chartered on June 4, 1907 with 15 members. As a part of the United Association, Local 370 worked to change the 10-hour workday and the working conditions of its members. Over the years the benefits enjoyed by the membership have changed and grown. Base wages, initiation fees, and window dues have all changed to reflect changing economic times. The pension fund and insurance fund were created by in response to the needs of the membership.

Over the past 100 years Local 370 has been an integral part for worker rights. Chartered 30 years before the famous UAW sitdown strike in 1937, members of Local 370

built the building where the sitdown strike took place. The members have been committed to protecting prevailing wages, working for laws to mandate plumbing licenses for anyone working in the plumbing industry, working with other labor organizations to improve the day-to-day lives of workers everywhere.

Committed to the United Association motto, "We Do It Right the First Time," Local 370 has created a first-class training center for apprentices to develop their skills. The current roster of almost 500 members can earn up to 70 different certifications from United Association. The members strive to be the best trained and most up to date in their professions.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Local 370 for their assurance to their craft, their customers, the public and to the American worker. We have all benefited from their desire to work in a safe, conscientious environment.

CONGRESSIONAL COMMISSION ON THE ABOLITION OF MODERN-DAY SLAVERY ACT INTRODUCTION

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues, Representatives CHRIS SMITH, CAROLYN MALONEY, and THELMA DRAKE to introduce a very important piece of legislation, the Congressional Commission on the Abolition of Modern-Day Slavery Act. The United States abolished slavery in the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, however, slavery continues around the world and we must seek ways to end the suffering. This bill will establish a highly qualified and bipartisan commission to make recommendations on what the United States can do to eradicate slavery in all corners of the Earth.

According to the International Labor Organization, more than 12.3 million people are victims of forced labor worldwide. Free the Slaves, a non-governmental organization, estimates that upwards of 27 million people are slaves today. The U.S. Government says that there are more than 14,500 people trafficked into labor or sex exploitation in the United States each year; perhaps hundreds of thousands of Americans are also trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation right here in their own country. Each of these individuals is a modern-day slave.

Modern-day slavery takes many forms, most often different from the images found in our own history. Rather than owning their slaves outright as in years past, the 21st century slaveholders use threats, violence and psychological coercion to keep slaves in dangerous and degrading working conditions with little or no pay. In countries around the world, slaves can be found in many labor-intensive industries, including the agricultural, commercial sex, construction, garment, manufacturing and service industries, as well as in domestic service.

To develop U.S. policy to end this man-made tragedy requires a thoughtful analysis of the factors contributing to slavery, a coordinated strategy among government agencies, and the political commitment of foreign gov-

ernments to pursue an end to slavery and an end to the impunity of slave holders. The Congressional Commission on the Abolition of Modern-Day Slavery would start this effort by examining best practices to prevent modern-day slavery, examining the effectiveness of U.S. laws prohibiting the importation of goods manufactured or produced through forced labor or child labor, examine U.S. policies and relations with countries that tolerate modern-day slavery, increase education and awareness about modern-day slavery, make recommendations to Congress on actions necessary to combat and eliminate modern-day slavery in all its forms, and more.

It is time to end the exploitation of people around the world. The U.S. Congress has the responsibility to study ways the United States can end modern forms of slavery and this commission will be the first step. There is no place in our world for slavery. Let's work to end it now!

RECOGNIZING DIANNA M.N. LE

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 24, 2007

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Dianna M.N. Le, a young woman from Guam who will serve our Nation as a commissioned officer in the United States Army. She has made her parents, Phat V. Le and Lylan T. Nguyen of Mangilao, Guam, and the people of Guam immensely proud. Dianna attended Wettengel Elementary School and Santa Barbara Middle School in Dededo, and graduated from St. John's College Preparatory School in Tumon, with a performance record that earned her a nomination to the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point. Having successfully maintained an outstanding academic record, Dianna M.N. Le will graduate from West Point and will be commissioned as a second lieutenant on May 26, 2007. She will soon begin an important and challenging career as a soldier and leader serving our country with distinction.

Throughout her 4 years at West Point, Cadet Le was recognized for her military skill and athleticism, as well as for her academic achievement. She earned the Recondo badge for military proficiency, the Army Physical Fitness Badge, the Indoor Obstacle Course Badge, and the Master of the Sword Badge. She was elected as team captain of the nationally ranked USMA Women's Army rugby team. She was twice selected as a 2nd Team All-American for her skill as a rugby player. She twice earned recognition on the Dean's list. Additionally, a paper which she co-authored was published in Applied Optics Journal.

As a second lieutenant, Dianna will serve as a Military Police officer. Following graduation, she will attend a 6-week Basic Officer Leadership Course (BOLC) in Fort Benning, Georgia. Upon completion of training at Fort Benning, she will receive additional training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, after which she will report for duty with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Bamberg, Germany.

In line with the USMA's mission to train military leaders, Dianna Le consistently upheld the Academy's principles, traditions, and values of "Duty, Honor, Country" throughout the